

HOBBS AND THE ABSOLUTE STATE

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subjects. *The Prince* is a manual of statecraft, *De Civ** a grammar of obedience.

The eleven years in Paris were a happy time. Hobbes had plenty of friends, old and new. After expounding his political doctrine he returned for a time to science and philosophy. He took a course in chemistry and studied anatomy with Sir William Petty. Descartes was at the height of his fame; but the greatest French and English thinkers of their time disliked each other's views, and it is not quite certain whether they ever met. Descartes believed that Hobbes had stolen his ideas on optics. Social life *was enriched when Royalist refugees began to stream across the Channel. Newcastle, the defeated commander at Marston Moor, dabbled in literature, and Bishop Bramhall was an expert metaphysician. More important was the arrival of the Prince of Wales, who joined his mother at St. Germain in 1646; for Hobbes was appointed his instructor in mathematics through Newcastle's influence. Having a bad name in Royalist circles, he was admonished to keep to his subject and not meddle with politics. His orthodoxy was also suspected, and the French clergy disliked his outspoken anti-Papalism. When he was dangerously ill in 1647, ^ ^ records in his autobiography, his beloved Mersenne came to see him, fearing that he might die outside the Church. The visitor was silenced by turning the conversation. When did you last see Gassendi? inquired the invalid, and his visitor took the hint. A few days later, however, when Cosin, afterwards Bishop of Durham, came and offered to pray with him, the sick man gladly consented and received the sacrament. In 1640 he had feared the zealots of the Short Parliament*. Ten years later, to use his own words, he could not trust the safety with the French clergy. He may even have feared 'assassination.

After the execution of the King Hobbes resolved to offer guidance to his afflicted country. In 1650 he allowed the *Cements of Law* to be printed, and in 1651 he permitted an English translation of *De Cive*. Moreover, the *Leviathan*, on which he had laboured since the collapse of the Royalist cause, was finished at last. In his attack on that book written many years later Clarendon declared that he had conversed with Hobbes in Paris on the eve of its appearance, and had asked him how he could publish such doctrines. The philosopher replied, more in jest than in earnest: "The truth is I have a mind to go home." Even if the conversation is correctly